Chapter One

INTRODUCTION: A PASSAGEWAY TO THE ISLAND HILLS

> *The Black Hills rise like an island from an ocean of grass-covered and treeless plains, watered by occasional and scanty supplies of rain; and the winds in passing over these plains gather some moisture which they part with as rain on being chilled by contact with the colder and more elevated region of the central portion of the hills. The result of this is the prevalence of frequent though not heavy rain-falls, giving to the hills a most peculiar climate* (Jenney 1875:181).

The figurative use of the term "island," as in "forested islands in a grassland sea" (Froiland 1978:1), has become a popular way for European American writers to metaphorically represent the Black Hills (Raventon 1994). The striking topography of the Hills, rising 4000 feet above the surrounding plains, the abundance and diversity of their minerals, fauna, and flora as compared to the neighboring grasslands and sagebrush steppes made them seem, as Lt. Richard I. Dodge (1965:149) put it, like "a true oasis in a wide and weary desert." Long before the arrival of European Americans in the region, "Island hills" or *Witapaha*[1] was an old name the Lakotas used for the Black Hills, and alternatively an ascription for peoples who lived in the Hills, including the Kiowas and possibly a division of the Cheyennes (Vestal 1934:264; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984: 314; LaPointe 1976:17).

Like the Black Hills, the nation's national parks are described in a similar language, as "islands under siege" or "islands of hope" (Keller and Turek 1998:29). In his quote appearing on the cover jacket to Philip Burnham's recent book (2000), *Indian Country, God's Country: Native Americans and the National Parks,* Colin Meine elaborates on this metaphor when he writes:

> Americans tend to view national parks as conscretated islands of nature, isolated both in time and space. We have recently begun to see that parks are embedded within larger, ever-changing landscapes, and that we must pay greater attention to the context if we hope to retain their natural features. But we are only beginning to understand that parks are also embedded within human histories and cultures, and that we need to know and understand that larger story as well.

The popular but false idea that national parks were once isolated and pristine enclaves is associated with many of the nation's most famous parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Glacier (Spence 1999). Situated in remote stretches of country, explored by European Americans only in recent historic times, these and other national parks carried an aura of pristine wilderness devoid of human habitation except, perhaps, in some long ago and now forgotten past. But few parks, if any, in the national park system ever stood outside the flows of human occupancy and use.

[1] The Cheyennes (Petter 1913-15:582; Mooney 1979:150-151) and Arikaras (Parks 2001b:970) also used derivations of this name for the Kiowas. In fact, Petter (Ibid.) claims the Cheyennes adopted this name from the Lakotas.

Certainly the Black Hills, no less than the area presently held by Wind Cave National Park, were not without human inhabitants. From prehistoric to modern times, the lands in and around this park served as significant crossroads in the history of human occupancy in the Black Hills. Yet, little more than thirty years ago, the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park in particular were believed to hold landscapes largely without human inhabitants until European Americans took up residence in the area during the 1870s. Relying on the reports of mid-nineteenth century European American observers with limited experience in the area, some twentieth century writers (Palais 1941:3; Parker 1966:5-6) perpetuated the idea that the Hills lacked a history of significant human occupancy. As recently as 1978, Sven G. Froiland (p. 1) in his now classic book, *Natural History of the Black Hills,* argued:

> Historical Indians considered the region as a holy ground, rarely encroached upon. At least, the assertion is made that the Indians seldom or never lived in the Hills. Although they hunted here, probably because of the abundance and diversity of game, there is no evidence to indicate that they spent much time in the Hills. On the contrary, numerous Indian reports, legends and traditions support the observation that they carefully avoided the area except on special occasions. They kept it more or less as a sanctuary for particular religious or ceremonial rites, or for hunting purposes. This seems well established among the Lakota but whether it was true of their predecessors, the Kiowa and the Cheyenne, is probably less certain.

A decade later, Helen Rezatto (1989:17) wrote in reference to the Lakotas:[2]

> ...the Sioux did not actually live within the Hills -- and the white man makes that assertion more often than the Indian does. Usually Indians camped within sight of the enchanted mountains in the sheltered and watered valleys around the edge of the Hills. They did most of their hunting in the wide-open plains and foothills where game was most plentiful. Occasionally, they ventured into the dense forests of the rock-bound Hills to cut lodgepoles from the tall pines. But the Sioux never stayed long.

While Rezatto acknowledges the Lakotas' common use of the foothills and less frequent occupation of the Hills' interiors, she perpetuates the widely held but false notion that it was not a part of the space within which they lived.

More recently, the Black Hills have become associated with a long and complex chronology of human settlement. Archaeologists have discovered Archaic sites, such as Beaver Creek Rock Shelter in Wind Cave National Park (Martin, Alex, and Benton 1988; Alex, L. 1991; Galindo 2000, 2001), and they have uncovered scores of other prehistoric remains, which reveal that multiple groups with contrasting adaptive strategies and different artifact assemblages used the region for many millenia (Tratebas 1986; Sundstrom, L. 1989, 1990). Historical sources document a veritable succession of American Indian people in the Black Hills, beginning with the Mandans, Hidatsas, Arikaras, Poncas, Kiowas, Plains Apaches (Naishan Dene), Crows, and Comanches and ending with the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas. All of these tribal nations

[2] *Lakota* means "allies," and it is the preferred term of identification for the people commonly labeled as *Sioux* in historical sources. While "Sioux" was widely used in the past, its use has been discontinued in most modern writings. Sioux is also a term that collectively refers to the Dakota and Lakota-speaking peoples who comprised the Seven Council Fires, *Oceti Sakowin,* of the Dakota/Lakota (or Sioux) nation. In recent years, the Yankton and Yanktonnai divisions of the Seven Council Fires have been included linguistically with the Sioux who use the "D" or Dakota dialect, and Nakota has been reserved for speakers of the Assiniboin language. The Lakota Sioux, also known as the Teton or Western Sioux, were the westernmost nation within the council. After 1830, most of them lived west of the Missouri River. They are also the Sioux with the longest and strongest attachment to the Black Hills.

were known to have lived or traveled in and around the Hills during the historic era, and many of them stayed in the area of Wind Cave National Park for varying lengths of time.

Europeans entered the Black Hills, probably in the early decades of the eighteenth century, as itinerant Spanish traders from the Southwest. By the end of the same century, French traders and trappers, working for the Spanish and later the French, were reported in the Black Hills. Some of them likely worked the creek near Wind Cave that carries the name of their most sought after animal, the beaver. None of these men left a written record of their travels, although a few of them, including Jon Vallé and Jean Baptiste Le Paige, shared some of their general knowledge of the Hills with the trader, Antoine Pierre Tabeau, and the explorers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark during the first decade of the nineteenth century. Nor did any of the later traders and trappers, who worked for American companies, leave much of a written record of their presence either. Only one trapper, James Clyman, who traveled with Jedediah Smith, wrote a very brief account of his passage across the southern Black Hills in 1823.

Beginning in the 1850s, several government-sponsored explorations left extensive records of their travels in the Black Hills. These include the reports of Lt. Gouverneur K. Warren, who accompanied expeditions under the leadership of General W. F. Harney in 1855, 1856, and 1857, and those from W. F. Raynolds' explorations in 1859. None of these groups entered the southern regions of the Hills. Later expeditions, including General George Custer and Samuel Hinman's reconnaissances of the Hills in 1874 penetrated their southern reaches, but they still skirted much of the area of Wind Cave National Park. A year later, Colonel Richard I. Dodge was the military commander of another expedition, led by geologists Walter P. Jenney and Henry Newton, that explored the Black Hills' interiors. While some of the party traveled Beaver Creek (known then as Amphibious Creek) to the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs areas, probably passing across park property near Wind Cave, they wrote little about the area other than its geological features. By 1875, throngs of gold seekers had streamed into the Black Hills, building camps in the interiors at places like French Creek near present day Custer. Although many of the miners and early settlers traveled "Indian" trails through the southern Black Hills to reach the mineral rich interiors, including one that came through the Buffalo Gap and followed Beaver Creek or its tributaries inside the present day boundaries of Wind Cave National Park, few of them wrote about the area or remained to settle.

Under treaties negotiated between the United States and the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes in 1868, the Black Hills became part of a vast territory known as the Great Sioux Reservation and off limits to non-Indians. The subsequent failure of the U.S. government to enforce its own treaty laws and to keep non-Indians out of this land contributed, in large part, to the hostilities that led up to the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876. This battle, combined with the discovery of the Hills' vast mineral resources, prompted the United States to illegally extinguish Lakota sovereignty over the Hills in 1877. Despite strenuous Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho opposition, the Black Hills were seized by the U.S. government with the passage of a congressional agreement in 1877 and "officially" opened to non-Indian settlement. In a short period of time, Americans of varied interests and backgrounds took up residence in the Hills. In the area of Wind Cave, they staked mineral claims and homesteaded ranches. Within a decade, outside entrepreneurs began to develop the region for its recreational and tourist potential. Today, ranching and tourism remain the economic backbone of human settlement in the Wind Cave region of the Black Hills.

In many ways, the region where Wind Cave National Park is situated represents a microcosm of the Hills' natural diversity and its complex cultural history. The area inside the Buffalo Gap, the well-known southern gateway into the Blacks Hills, was a location for tribal winter

camps and the site of important trails leading to the Hills' higher reaches. It was an area renowned for the richness of its game and the medicinal values of its waters and plants. It was also a region where prehistoric peoples mined outcroppings of chalcedony, quartzite, and gypsum in the park and/or at nearby Battle Mountain. The park itself stands on the site of the famous Race Track, where a race among the animals determined human fate in a time before history, and it sits at the location of a cavernous opening to the subterranean world from which, according to Lakota traditions, humans and bison emerged to populate the world.

I. THE PLACE

Geographically, Wind Cave National Park sits at the southeastern edge of the Black Hills' heavily forested, island-like habitat. The Black Hills represent a domal uplift of great age, existing well before the formation of the Rocky Mountains (Froiland 1978:19-24). Since the 1920s, the Black Hills proper have been described as consisting of four physiographic zones: 1) a central core of igneous and metamorphic rock, surrounded by 2) a high elevation plateau of limestone, sandstone, and dolomitic shale, followed by 3) a low elevation depression that nearly encircles the Hills, known as the Red Valley or the Race Track, and finally, 4) an exterior Hogback zone made up predominately of sandstone interspersed with limestone and shales (Darton and Paige 1925; Froiland 1978:11-17). More recently, another zone has been added to this division, and it consists of the tablelands and foothills separating the Red Valley from the interior plateau, and, in the southern Black Hills, this region is known as the Minnekahta Plains (Froiland 1978:18). Part of Wind Cave National Park sits astride the Race Track or Red Valley, nestled between the outer sandstone escarpments of the Hogback and the limestone plateau of the interior. The northwest corner of the park reaches into the crystalline central core, and, as a result, the park encompasses the major geological zones that make up the Black Hills.

Wind Cave National Park is also located in a transitional biotic zone, a region where mixed-grass prairies meet the higher elevation ponderosa forests, and where important watersheds, such as Beaver and Highland creeks, form their own distinctive riparian and woodlands-like environments, connecting the upland grasslands and forests to the lowland prairies and woodlands outside the Hogback. With the possible exception of the northern coniferous biome, dominated by spruce forests and grassy meadows, most of the major vegetation biomes associated with the Black Hills are represented at Wind Cave National Park. These are: 1) the Rocky Mountain complex of ponderosa pine, intermingled with stands of red cedar that covers much of the higher elevation interiors and the inner slopes of the Hogback; 2) the grassland biome, which combines features of the arid short-grass and sage-brush steppes to the west and the more humid mixed to tall grass prairies of the east and follows the Foothills, Red Valley, and the outer edge of the Hogback, and 3) a deciduous forest biome of oaks, elms, and cottonwoods that hugs many of the lower elevation waterways from the Foothills to the valley of the Cheyenne River (Froiland 1978:81-96; Sundstrom, L. 1990:57-59; Larson & Johnson 1999:7-25).

Near the park, the thermal springs to the south create their own specialized habitat, and even though they are outside the boundaries of the park itself, they are an integral part of the broader upland mixed-grass prairie that makes up much of the park's landscape. Many other features of the area that adjoin the park, especially the Buffalo Gap, are closely connected to Wind Cave and the Race Track. Indeed, they are inseparable in many tribal conceptualizations of this part of the Black Hills. Together they form a geographic area that is distinct environmentally from other areas of the Hills, but at the same time, integrally connected to the region as a whole.

Climatically, the Black Hills embraces mountain and semi-arid continental types with the latter dominating the weather patterns in the southern reaches of the Hills. Wind Cave is located inside the Hogback in the warmer and more arid parts of the Hills, euphemistically called the "banana belt." Overall, the climate in this region is milder in the winter than the surrounding plains and steppes. Not only are the winds more moderate, but the temperature is warmer. The southern region is typically protected from the arctic air masses that swing over the northern edge of the Hills, and it also receives warm Chinook winds from the south that keep the area snow free throughout much of the winter. Although the southern Hills receive more rainfall than the surrounding open plains, they are much drier than the higher elevation areas to the north. But like the rest of the Black Hills, the heaviest precipitation falls in the form of snow during the late winter and spring months. During the summer, intermittent and sometimes heavy thundershowers frequent the area. In suitable and well-watered soil locations, many areas inside the Hogback sustain an average of 142 frost-free days each year, a season long enough to support corn and other cultigens (Johnson 1949; Froiland 1978:34-39 ; Sundstrom, L. 1990:56-57).

Hydrologically, the Black Hills are part of the Missouri River drainage system. Many of the region's continuously flowing streams drain into the Cheyenne River, whose two forks nearly encircle the Hills. In the southern Hills, the waterways of French, Beaver, Cascade, Hayward, Stockade-Beaver creeks and the Fall River empty into the South Fork of the Cheyenne River, while the waterways of the central Hills, Elk, Box Elder, Rapid, and Battle Creeks, flow east and empty into the Cheyenne near its forks. The waterways of the northern hills, Sand, Spearfish, Whitewood, and Bear Butte creeks, drain in a northeasterly direction and feed the North Fork of the Cheyenne, otherwise known as the Belle Fourche River. Beaver Creek and its major tributaries cross Wind Cave National Park and form an important drainage system that cuts through the Hogback at the Buffalo Gap (Froiland 1978:28-32; Sundstrom, L. 1990:54-56).

The park is named after the cave whose labyrynth of passageways occupy some of the subsurface on the park's western slopes. Formed by the porous limestones that comprise part of the Black Hills' interior landscape, Wind Cave is one of many caves in the park that are part of a wider cavernous structure surrounding the Hills' central crystalline core and that may very well interconnect and extend like fingertips to other subsurface locations on the surrounding prairies (Rezatto 1989:180). Whether or not the cavernous structure underneath Wind Cave National Park is linked to other cave formations in the Hills and beyond, it is clear that the life forms that make up its surface area are integrally connected to surrounding landscapes. The Buffalo Gap, southeast of the park, is a famous passageway, where in earlier times bison and other game entered the Hills to seek shelter along the Red Valley and where they returned to the surrounding prairies to feed on the luxuriant grasses at locations as far south as central Nebraska. From its headwaters on the higher elevation limestone plateau north of Pringle, South Dakota, Beaver Creek winds its way to the Cheyenne River, passing near Wind Cave and cutting through the Buffalo Gap. This creek and its tributaries were important trails that animals and humans followed in moving from the lowland prairies to the upland forest regions of the Hills. Generally speaking the area where Wind Cave National Park stands has been an important geographic connecting point, a crossroads linking the mountains to the plains. Besides its vertical connectedness from highland to lowland, the park covers an important part of the unique geological depression, known as the "Red Valley" or "Race Track," which encircles the Hills interior, and this makes it integrally linked, at least from a tribal perspective, to other parts of the Black Hills as well.

II. THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Technically, the purpose of this report is to provide information to the National Park Service pursuant to understanding the human history of Wind Cave National Park and the cultural affiliations that various groups have maintained to its natural and human-made resources. Since there are many different cultural histories, traditions, and cosmologies that bear upon Wind Cave National Park, it is necessary to adjust our lens to many different settings. We need to see the park in terms of the people it witnessed, the events it marked, the cultural resources it held, the uses it supported, and the stories it embraced. In order to do this properly, we need to discover its place in the larger scheme of the Black Hills, and we also need to understand its position in the wider web of relationships that linked the Hills to the peopling of the surrounding grasslands of South Dakota, Wyoming, and Nebraska. There are four major bodies of substantive evidence that this report covers, and that provide a passageway into the park's complex and ever changing cultural history.

- 1) The first body of evidence identifies the communities of people with known historical affiliations to the area of Wind Cave National Park and the different groups of observers who reported on their associations. It describes the migrations of people to and away from this area at different moments in history, the uses they made of the area while living in its reach, and some of the conditions behind their arrivals and departures.

- 2) The second group of data consider how different peoples adapted to the area. In particular, it focuses on the specific nature of their social, political, and economic relationships to the park and its surrounding environs. It examines the kinds of procurement activities associated with this area, and how these are related to broader productive orientations and territorial movements. It analyzes the varying and culturally specific conceptualizations of land-use that have been associated with park lands, and it discusses how the park has stood paradoxically as both a common ground and a contested terrain. In doing so, it traces the long, protracted, and continuing struggles between the United States and the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho nations over ownership of the Black Hills, including areas within the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park. Pursuant to this, it gives special attention to the nineteenth-century treaties and agreements these tribal nations negotiated with the federal government and the relevant Black Hills claims cases they pursued (or attempted to move) against the government in the twentieth century.

- 3) The report also gives detailed attention to the various faunal, floral, and mineral resources on park properties. It describes the cultural meanings attached to them and the uses to which they were put by some of the different peoples who occupied the area. It considers the continuing importance of some of these resources in the cultural practices of the two tribal nations with the longest continuing association to the area in historic times, namely, the Lakotas and Cheyennes.

- 4) Considerable attention is devoted in this report to the cultural significance of the park's landscape, both above and below ground. Like the Black Hills of which it is a part, the area of Wind Cave National Park has long held sacred significance to the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and perhaps other tribal nations as well. The report describes and interprets why park lands occupy such an important place in tribal cosmologies, and why these continue to draw local tribes to the area for the conduct of some of their most important religious observances.

All of these different but related bodies of substantive evidence form the basis for identifying what kinds of cultural interests and properties are linked to the park and for discussing how these relate to park management plans and actions. These cover three separate but related topics.

- 1) The report considers issues relating to the identification and preservation of sites and resources for purposes of special recognition and protection in relation to traditional cultural properties. Four pieces of federal legislation are relevant here: the *American Indian Religious Freedom Act* of 1978, the *Archaeological Resources Protection Act* of 1979, the *National Historic Preservation Act* of 1966, the *Native American Graves and Repatriation Act* of 1990, and the various ammendments to some of these acts through 2000. Also important are two recent Executive Orders, 13007 and 13084, enacted into law in 1996 and 1998 respectively. All of these are described in greater detail in Chapter Eight, Section IV.

- 2) It deals with issues of access, particularly, the need for tribal peoples to use park lands to conduct any of a variety of religious activities, and also their need to extract certain resources for these purposes. Given the spiritual significance that this area holds for them, it commands special sensitivity in relation to the continuance of certain traditional cultural practices.

- 3) It looks at questions of representation and interpretation, particularly what kinds of cultural narratives are told about the area, by whom, and under what sets of circumstances. Some of the central cultural issues that affect the park and its properties are not simply about ownership and access to the land and its resources, but also about how their very definition gets privileged and conveyed in public discourse. In this regard, the report deals with issues of tribal intellectual property rights, and it also considers how topics of value for interpretive and educational programming might be developed in ways that reveal and reflect the importance of the area to the various communities the park serves.

III. THE SOURCE MATERIAL

The search for cultural information about Wind Cave National Park has presented special challenges. It is an area about which little was directly written until the late nineteenth century in sources based on the oral traditions and writings of either American Indians or European Americans. Therefore, a very general approach must be followed that takes in the entire Black Hills and the surrounding grasslands in order to get some perspective on what was happening in the particular area where Wind Cave National Park is located. The specific records we studied for this report are described in greater depth in the bodies of subsquent chapters, but here we focus on the types of materials gathered for presentation and analysis.

The first body of material includes a wide variety of culture history sources, both primary and secondary, which helped us chronicle the population movements, cultural uses, and historical events relating to park lands. Before the 1740s, the evidence is derived from the archaeological record. For the historic era, the sources cover the accounts of European Americans who reported on the area from afar as well as those who traveled and/or settled in the region, including the writings and oral traditions of traders, travelers, missionaries, settlers, government officials, military personnel, and newspaper correspondents. They also cover the accounts of American Indians who lived and traveled in the area and whose knowledge was recorded in their own writings, winter counts, and oral traditions.

The second body of information comes from the ethnographic record, which contains some of the material described above but focuses more broadly on the knowledges, beliefs, and activities that constitute what is conventionally called a "culture" or "way of life." Here, primary and secondary sources were examined as well. In relation to the various tribal nations reported to have lived and/or traveled in the area of Wind Cave National Park, an enormous amount of ethnographic material was surveyed. Sources were examined for the Apaches, Arapahos, Arikaras, Cheyennes, Comanches, Crows, Hidatsas, Kiowas, Lakotas, Mandans, Omahas, Pawnees, and Poncas. Although all of these tribes had known connections to the Hills at different points in history, some more than others, only the Cheyennes and Lakotas were found to have had any prolonged association with the southeastern Black Hills that continued beyond the 1877 Agreement, which led the United States to take exclusive title to the land. They are also the only two tribes whose cultural attachments to the area of Wind Cave National Park and its immediate environs have been documented in the published and archival sources we studied for this report. The Lakotas (along with the Cheyennes remaining in their midst) who lived and/or who were enrolled on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations east of the park and whose descendents now make up the Oglala Sioux and Rosebud Sioux tribes are the ones who have had the most active on-site associations with the park in the twentieth century. Therefore, these are the tribal nations who receive the most attention in this report, although other tribes are recognized in various ways and degrees as well.

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The Plains Apaches, Kiowas, Crows, Arikaras, Hidatsas, and Mandans, for example, preserved memories of the Black Hills in their oral traditions, but the regions to which they attached a special and continuing cultural importance were largely on the northern side of the Hills. The Poncas also retained memories of having lived near the Hills, and they even have a name for Wind Cave in their language, but there is little evidence in published ethnographic sources for any continuing and active link to the region. Also, none of these tribal nations were legally identified with the Black Hills in treaties and agreements with the United States. The Arapahos were parties to treaties and agreements involving the Black Hills; however, little has been recorded in the ethnographic literature about their cultural connections to the area. Most of the material we uncovered associates the Arapahos with the western side of the Hills and with Bear Butte or Bear Lodge Butte (a.k.a. Devil's Tower). Nothing is recorded in the ethnograhic literature about any cultural attachments to Wind Cave National Park or its immediate environs. Other than what might be deduced from the general nature of their historic patterns of residency and cultural adaptations to the area, we have not been able to identify, based on what has been recorded in the published literature, any specific cultural attachments to this area for tribal nations[3] other than the Cheyennes and Lakotas.

A lack of information in the ethnographic and historic record, however, should never be construed as definitive of the possible presence or absence of any tribe's cultural affiliations with Wind Cave National Park. Interviews with tribal cultural resource officers from many different federally-recognized tribes (see Appendix D) indicate that all of the Sioux tribes who were party to the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 have definite, and, for some, very specific cultural attachments to park properties. It also indicates that the Northern/Southern Cheyennes and the Northern/Southern Arapahos have continuing cultural affiliations to the region where the park is located. The Three Affiliated Tribes (Arikaras-Mandans-Hidatsas), the Plains Apaches, and the Kiowas also expressed cultural interest in the area. It is important to note that the inter-

[3] This is true only in terms of the archival sources and published material we studied for this report. It is very possible that any one or more of these other groups may have some kind of continuing cultural relation to the area that has not been documented in the sources we reviewed.

views with various tribal cultural preservation officers support, for the most part, what is deduced from published sources where the firsthand accounts of tribal people, including their speeches, oral narratives, written documents, and winter counts were extensively used in reconstructing the history of tribal cultural connections to the area of Wind Cave National Park.

Much of the cultural *qua* ethnographic information presented in this report focuses on the tribal nations who lived in and around the Black Hills, but some of it also touches on the European American communities who settled in the area. As explained in forthcoming discussions, while Wind Cave National Park played an important role in the history and local economy of the southeastern Hills, particularly the communities of Hot Springs, Pringle, and Buffalo Gap, there is no evidence that local European Americans ever attached any special cultural meanings to it other than those associated with its presence as a geological curiosity and an important tourist attraction. In the years before the park was established, and for some years thereafter, it was a hunting area, an open range for grazing cattle, and a location for homesteading.

Another body of material examined for this report includes a wide variety of sources on the area's natural history, both primary documents based on the firsthand observations of European Americans who traveled and/or lived in the area in the last half of the nineteenth century as well as more contemporary descriptions of species habitats in the Black Hills. This information was critical in reaching some understanding of the historic and continuing uses to which park lands were put by the Cheyennes and Lakotas and also to the meanings they ascribed to the area and its resources.

Finally, a number of different treaty records, congressional documents, and court dockets are reviewed here, especially those that pertain to treaties, agreements, claims, and other kinds of congressional legislation that bear upon Wind Cave National Park. Although some attempt is made to address and interpret this legal history, none of those who worked on this project have the necessary expertise to interpret some of the dense and, at times, arcane legal rulings and readings that surround the litigious history of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Sioux's Black Hills claims and their more recent battles over traditional cultural property rights and access to sacred sites in and around the Black Hills.

Looking for information specific to Wind Cave National Park and the area where it is situated was like searching for the proverbial "needle in the haystack." Many isolated bits and pieces of information were collected that did not appear very significant at first sight. However, when these were assembled and analyzed together, and compared against information for other areas of the Black Hills, a number of distinct and recurring themes emerged that could be traced across materials on diverse sets of phenomena. The data reveal that a number of cultural themes are associated with this area. The cultural expressions of some of them are not only long-standing, reaching back at least to middle of the nineteenth century, but many are also shared among the three tribes, Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, who occupied the Black Hills when they were seized in 1877.

There is a compelling story here, one that is rooted not only in the history of American Indian understandings and uses of the area where Wind Cave National Park now sits, but one that also carries curious traces in European American conceptualizations of and adaptations to the area. Yet, none of these meanings or usages can be fully understood without some appreciation of the larger region that makes up the Black Hills, its waves of human occupation, the diverse adaptations humans made to them, and above all the habits and habitats of the animals, plants and other life forms so important to the way in which this region has been treated by the people who came here to visit or live.

IV. THE INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVES

Given the wide range of substantive materials covered here, from studies of plant distributions to texts of tribal origin stories, several different research strategies and methodologies were followed in interpreting and making sense of the vast body of material available on Wind Cave National Park specifically and the Black Hills region as a whole. These include standard historiographic approaches for examining and interpreting the chronology of population movements, settlements, and intergroup relationships in the area. They also involve the use of cultural ecological or materialist perspectives for analyzing some of the diverse ways local groups adapted to the area, used its resources, and formed relationships to the land, based on cooperation as well as competition. Finally, they employ intepretive techniques, following the work of anthropologists such as Keith Basso (1996) to understand some of the cultural meanings behind the sacred narratives and observances that have been associated with the area by historic and modern tribal peoples. In telling the story of Wind Cave National Park and its environs, this report is divided into four sections, each of which focuses on different facets of the complex cultural relations that various American Indian and European American people have had to the area.

The first section looks at how the Black Hills functioned as a crossroads and a gathering place where people of diverse backgrounds came together in several successive waves of occupation, and it considers how the area of Wind Cave National Park fits into these larger patterns of movement and settlement. Not only does it identify the groups who occupied the Hills at various moments in time, but, equally important, it describes how different groups stood in relationship to each other. Before 1877, when the United States claimed title to the region, the Black Hills were a location where tribal nations of diverse backgrounds met, traded, intermarried, and formed political alliances. Although tribes competed and fought with each other to gain access to and assert control over the area, the more common pattern involved multitribal parties jointly occupying the region, sharing access to its resources, and holding the area as allied forces. In historic times, at least, the Hills were never the exclusive domain of any single tribal nation. In the 1870s, the Lakotas were the dominant population in the Black Hills, but there were significant numbers of Cheyennes and Arapahos in the area too.

While the Hills remained a major gathering place for tribal nations, it was a peripheral area for European Americans, who came here in small numbers, largely as trader/trappers and incorporated themselves into the social networks of local tribes. After the 1850s, the area became the focus of several government-sponsored explorations, but it was not until the gold rush of 1874 that thousands of European Americans flocked to the area, making it one of the most densely populated and rapidly developing locations in the northern plains. After European Americans arrived, the cast of people who occupied the Hills dramatically changed. The tribal nations who once controlled it were forcibly removed to make way for the ethnically diverse groups of Americans who came to dominate its landscape. From 1874 until 1903, the year when Wind Cave National Park was established, the report summarizes the chronology of events and conditions that contributed to new kinds of population movements and settlements in and around the Hills, focusing primarily on their southeastern reaches. It gives attention to the ways incoming European Americans occupied and used this area, and also how American Indian people, especially the Lakotas, maintained a continuing, albeit changed, relationship to the area. After 1903, it considers how the peopling and use of the southeastern Hills continued to undergo change, and it discusses what impacts this had on the park's relationships with its neighbors, Indians and whites alike.

The second section of the report covers the diverse ways in which populations socially defined their relations to the Black Hills, and, in the process, how they adapted their economies and systems of land tenure to the Hills' distinct environments. From prehistoric to modern times, the utilization of the Hills, including the lands now occupied by Wind Cave National Park, not only involved populations with very different kinds of productive orientations but also people who approached the Hills from widespread locations both near and far. Not unlike the situation today, where the Hills have their local residents and their tourists from distant locales, they were utilized in the past by peoples who stayed within their reach or who approached them from far off locations on a regular and recurring basis.

A consistent theme that runs throughout this section is that the Black Hills in general and the region of Wind Cave National Park in particular served paradoxically as a common ground, settled and utilized by many different groups who shared access to the same lands but often on different terms. At the same time, they acted as a contested terrain, where people fought to retain or gain access to the "commons" on behalf of distinct and sometimes competing sets of interests. Before 1877, bands of Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos all lived in and around the Hills under a general umbrella of peace. A century earlier, however, the area was bitterly contested as these three tribes gradually wrestled control of the area from many of its older residents, notably Plains Apaches, Comanches, Kiowas, and Crows. But even these fights were not always neatly divided because at certain points in history some Cheyennes were on the Kiowa side of the battlefield, while others stood with the Lakotas.

It was the battles of the Arapahos, Cheyennes, and Lakotas with invading miners and with the U.S. military that would define much of the late nineteenth-century history of the Black Hills. In the twentieth century, the fighting continued, but now the war was waged in the courts, on protest lines, and in the media. Beginning with the protracted and still unsettled history of the Sioux's Black Hills Claim and continuing to more recent lawsuits over traditional cultural property rights and religious freedoms, a complex and unresolved set of legal issues hangs over the Black Hills, its lands, resources, and people. The modern conflict surrounding the Black Hills is not simply a contestation over *de facto* versus *de jura* property rights. It also represents a fundamental schism over very different perceptions of what this place means, and how it is situated in a larger cosmological scheme of things. It is ultimately a fight over sovereignity, over who has the right to name and define the meaning of this place, and directly following, who ought to be the rightful steward of its manifold and complex resources. Wind Cave National Park sits in the middle of this maelstrom, and as a result, its management policies and actions are influenced in subtle as well as obvious ways by the politics and legal battles that surround it. Therefore, tracing the history of treaties, claims litigation, and congressional legislation that pertain to the Hills is a necessary part of this report. Much of the legal side of this contested history is covered in Chapter Eight of Section Two.

The Black Hills has also been a crossroads and meeting ground for numerous species of fauna and flora. It contains complex habitats with hundreds of different fauna and over one thousand varieties of plants, many of which are unique to the Hills and not located in the surrounding grasslands. The Hills contain a wealth of minerals and clays, springs and sources of fresh water. The geological and biological diversity of the region acted like a magnet, attracting diverse tribal nations to its edges and interiors to draw on the wealth of its resources for general and/or particular purposes. For many of the tribes who lived in or around the Hills, they were seen as a vast repository of resources, envisioned in the image of a cache or safe. Later, they drew European Americans to their mineral wealth, their rich grasses, and their abundant stands of timber. Many of the newcomers came and left with the boom and bust of the gold rush, but others stayed

on to develop the paying mines, timber stands, and arable lands. Over time, the region drew on its recreational potential and the reputation of its scenic beauty and unique wildlife.

The natural diversity of the Hills, especially the region of Wind Cave National Park, is the subject of Section Three. Chapters Nine through Eleven describe the vertible panoply of resources that make up the park. Drawing on a wide range of botanical, zoological, and geological source material, it matches resources known to exist on park lands with information on their uses and meanings among the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and other tribes as well. Although some attention is given to the historic interests of European Americans in park resources, the predominant focus in these chapters is placed on traditional tribal interests. It seeks to identify resources that might be identified as traditional cultural properties and to explain why these were important historically and why they remain so in contemporary contexts.

One of the points that is emphasized time and again in this report is that tribal relationships to this area are totalistic, not easily disaggregated into a series of discrete landforms and natural resources that can be isolated and inventoried. Although many of the resources discussed here are organized in terms of standard, empirically-based systems of classification, these do not follow the logic by which either the Cheyennes or the Lakotas order their worlds. For reasons that become apparent in later discussions, Cheyenne and Lakota conceptualizations of Wind Cave National Park and the Black Hills as a whole are synergistic, weaving together diverse phenomena in a unified scheme where, for example, breath, winter, bison, caves, and gypsum are interchangable manifestations of one another. The significance of the park and its surrounding environs is not about a specific landscape feature, a cave *qua* cave, or the presence of a particular resource with empirically established uses and properties. Rather, it is about the integrated placement of a sequence of sites and resources in relationship to each other. It is also about their relation to the larger whole -- that is, the Black Hills.

Section Four attempts to give some sense of the importance and centrality of the Wind Cave National Park area in Cheyenne and Lakota beliefs as revealed not only in the texts of various stories about the area but also in the performance of significant ceremonies, which are believed by some Cheyennes and Lakotas to have originated in this region. It also attempts to explain how this area, its landforms and resources, constitute an integrated whole that is understood as distinct but related to other equally significant areas of the Black Hills. In doing so, it describes many of the cosmological precepts and spiritual practices that have a direct bearing on the cultural significance of sites in and around Wind Cave National Park. The lands of Wind Cave National Park, both below and above ground, embrace significant cultural sites with complex meanings and symbolic relationships. Two major origin places, Wind Cave itself and the Race Track, are located on park properties, and at least one major ceremony, the Sun Dance, is associated in some cultural traditions with the park. Because the sanctity of this area and other locations in the Black Hills have been called into question in recent years by several scholars and journalists who argue that beliefs about its sacredness are a fabrication of modern tribal activists to reclaim possession of the Hills, considerable pains are taken in this report to trace the historical depth of modern beliefs associated with the park and also to show how these are consistent with a wider body of cosmological tenets well established in the religious discourse of the Cheyennes and the Lakotas.

In many ways, Wind Cave National Park reflects the wider history of the Hills and their associated cultural traditions. Both its history and cultural meanings are contested, like the larger region of which it is a part. Indeed, it can be safely said that this park and others in the Black Hills under the management of the National Park Service occupy some of the most embattled lands in the national park system. The cultural wars and controversy that surround the area

cannot be avoided. Ignoring these would be intellectually dishonest and an obstacle to making sound recommendations on how park management policies and actions impact the public they serve, which includes peoples with a very different sense of entitlement to and interest in park properties.

This is a large report that contains an enormous body of information, owing in large part to the cultural diversity and complexity of the region's human occupation, not to mention the on-going controversies that continue to surround it. Given the vast amount of material presented here, it may seem hard to see the park from the Hills. Much of the material does not pertain to Wind Cave National Park directly; nonetheless, it is indispensible for understanding the particular role the park has played in the cultural histories of American Indians and European Americans. The Table of Contents, of course, offers a road map to steer the reader through the dense body of material that comprises the report. Throughout most of the report, park specific information is embedded in discussions of a wider body of information that gives meaning and/or context to its landscape. The reader is advised, however, that at the end of each chapter, from Two through Thirteen, there is a synopsis, which summarizes and focuses the evidence on the particular case of Wind Cave National Park. Two chapters, Fourteen and Fifteen, concentrate much of their attention on the park's landscape and its resources. Chapter Fourteen discusses the religious significance of the park and its environs to the Lakotas and Cheyennes. Chapter Fifteen ties much of the varied information found in earlier chapters together in a single unifying narrative, part of which serves to review and interpret the information previously presented. The final chapter and conclusion, Chapter Sixteen, provides specific recommendations on further tribal consultations. It also offers suggestions on park management policies and actions relevent to the protection of resources and sites, on special requests for access to park properties, and, finally, on the development of interpretive programming that incorporates some of the distinctive cultural histories and traditions associated with the park.